

Mission

The purpose of the Register of Deeds is to provide to the citizens of Waukesha County:

- 1) A depository for safekeeping and public inspection of all legal documents pertaining to Real Estate, Vital Statistics and Uniform Commercial Code.
- 2) Analyze and create accurate ownership and descriptions of parcels in Waukesha County to aid assessors in local municipalities.

Financial Summary

	2002 Actual	2003 Adopted Budget	2003 Estimate (a)	2004 Budget	Change from 2003 Adopted Budget	
					\$	%
General Fund						
Personnel Costs	\$1,011,040	\$1,212,936	\$1,287,486	\$1,263,314	\$50,378	4.2%
Operating Expenses	\$88,036	\$65,353	\$62,614	\$128,369	\$63,016	96.4%
Interdept. Charges	\$414,266	\$362,733	\$677,623	\$431,471	\$68,738	19.0%
Fixed Assets	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A
Total Expenditures	\$1,513,342	\$1,641,022	\$2,027,723	\$1,823,154	\$182,132	11.1%
General Government	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A
Fine/Licenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A
Charges for Services	\$3,562,102	\$2,499,598	\$4,596,713	\$2,686,236	\$186,638	7.5%
Interdepartmental	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A
Other Revenue (b)	\$66	\$0	\$525	\$45,500	\$45,500	N/A
Total Revenues	\$3,562,168	\$2,499,598	\$4,597,238	\$2,731,736	\$232,138	9.3%
Tax Levy (c)	(\$2,048,826)	(\$858,576)	(\$2,569,515)	(\$908,582)	(\$50,006)	-5.8%

Position Summary (FTE)

Regular Positions	25.88	27.00	27.00	27.00	0.00
Extra Help (d)	2.12	1.10	4.65	1.10	0.00
Overtime	0.23	0.12	0.85	0.12	0.00
Total	28.23	28.22	32.49	28.22	0.00

- (a) The 2003 estimate exceeds the 2003 adopted budget. The department will need to process an ordinance in the 4th quarter to appropriate additional revenue and expenditure authority associated with higher than budgeted real estate document processing levels.
- (b) The 2004 Budget includes fund balance appropriations of \$45,500 for one-time office redesign expenses.
- (c) Revenues in excess of expenditures are used to offset tax levy funding required for other county general fund operations.
- (d) In addition to the county temporary extra help the department purchased an equivalent of 2.25 FTE in Third Party Temporary Help in 2002. An estimated equivalent of 0.50 FTE in Third Party Temporary Help is expected to in 2003 due to continued high workload volume.

Departmental Objectives

1. Evaluate new technologies such as e-recording and optical character recognition (OCR) to further automate document processing and increase the productivity of the current staff (Critical Issue 1) (4th quarter 2004).
2. Enhance customer service in Vital Records by evaluating the use of a public access computer. Work with the Records Management Division of the Department of Administration to maintain the privacy of the confidential portions of the records when viewed by the public and consider the use of a touch screen (Critical Issue 1) (4th quarter 2004).
3. Increase security in the Vital Records area by reconfiguring the current workspace for the staff and the public to eliminate the practice of having genealogists enter the vault to use the records (Critical Issue 2) (4th quarter).
4. Work cooperatively with the Treasurer's Office and the Department of Administration Information Systems Division on the selection, installation, and development of a new tax listing and tax collection program (Critical Issue 1) (4th quarter 2004).

Major Departmental Strategic Achievements from 7/01/02 to 6/30/03

1. Improved and standardized training materials and process to increase consistency and level of knowledge of new employees (Critical Issue 3, Goal 3.2).
2. Developed a policy on the type and amount of customer service the department is able to provide through an evaluation of statutory responsibilities, staff time and experience level, and a comparison with other counties in the state (Critical Issue 2, Goal 2.1).
3. Increased quality and customer service by reducing errors in document processing and indexing (Critical Issue 4, Goal 4.5).
4. Improved the recruitment and selection of new employees through the evaluation and development of more specific qualifications and skills-based testing (Critical Issue 3, Goal 3.1).
5. Developed self-help instructions at public access terminals to guide the public in their use of Register of Deeds' manual and automated records systems (Critical Issue 2, Goal 2.2).
6. Evaluated the needs of the office and planned for physical changes in the workspace available for employees (Critical Issue 4, Goal 4.7).

Current and Proposed Capital Projects

Proj. #	Project Name	Expected Completion Year	Total Project Cost	Est. % Complete End of 03	Estimated Operating Impact	A=Annual T=One-Time
200205	Tax Records Replacement (a)	2004	\$725,000	60%	\$85,000	A
200414	Countywide Cashiering (b)	2006	\$445,000	N/A	TBD	A

Refer to Capital Project section of the budget book for additional detail.

(a) Project is coordinated by Department of Administration, annual ongoing costs include software and licensing costs which are to be split evenly between the Register of Deed's Office (\$42,500) and Treasurer's Office (\$42,500).

(b) Project is coordinated by Department of Administration.

Administrative Services

Program Description

Administrative Services is responsible for coordinating and providing efficient administrative support to the department, including management of the office, working on business continuity, strategic planning, accounting and annual budget preparation. Fees are collected for the transfer of real estate based on the value of the property, with certain statutory exceptions. The County's portion of the fee (20%) is allocated to this program and the balance is sent to the State on a monthly basis.

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Staffing (FTE)	6.48	5.70	7.99	4.60	(1.10)
Personnel Costs	\$339,667	\$305,644	\$348,658	\$296,641	(\$9,003)
Operating Expenses	\$66,833	\$26,269	\$31,292	\$73,161	\$46,892
Interdept. Charges	\$20,847	\$38,016	\$33,505	\$31,921	(\$6,095)
Total Expenditures	\$427,347	\$369,929	\$413,455	\$401,723	\$31,794
Charges for Services	\$1,390,522	\$1,154,098	\$1,470,668	\$1,192,236	\$38,138
Other Revenue	\$66	\$0	\$525	\$45,500	\$45,500
Total Revenues	\$1,390,588	\$1,154,098	\$1,471,193	\$1,237,736	\$83,638
Tax Levy (a)	(\$963,241)	(\$784,169)	(\$1,057,738)	(\$836,013)	(\$51,844)

(a) Revenues in excess of expenditures are used to offset tax levy funding required for other county general fund operations.

**Program Highlights**

Base budget personnel costs include across the board salary, merit and benefit cost increases associated with 4.60 FTE. Personnel costs decrease \$9,003 reflecting the shift of Temporary Extra Help (1.10 FTE) from Administrative Services to Real Estate and Cashiering program areas to more accurately reflect the program areas in which the extra help is used.

Operating costs increase \$46,892, mainly due a \$45,500 one-time expense to redesign office space to accommodate workloads and work practices that have changed since the department moved into the space in 1994. The redesign is funded through the \$45,500 one-time appropriation of General Fund balance and is expected to enhance employee supervision, training and customer service by grouping tasks and employees by function.

Additionally, base operating costs include supply, equipment, maintenance and training related expenses for the department, which increase \$1,392 due to an increased need for supplies and equipment to process the increased number of documents.

Interdepartmental charges decrease \$6,095 due to a reallocation of ongoing End User Technology Fund (EUTF) charges to the programs that more accurately reflect programs costs and a reallocation of copier charges to the Vital Records program area.

Charges for Services revenues increase \$38,138 or 3.3% to \$1,192,236 reflecting an inflationary adjustment in estimated property sales. The transfer fee is collected on property sales at a rate of \$3 per \$1,000 of value. The County retains 20% of the collected amount and forwards the remaining 80% to the state. Other revenue reflects the appropriation of \$45,500 of General Fund balance for the office space redesign outlined above.

Cashiering

Program Description

Cashiering examines all legal documents to assure conformity to state statutes, advises the public of procedures for probate of an estate held in joint tenancy, and advises the public on laws and regulations concerning statutory requirements of the Register of Deeds Office. Cashiering collects and deposits the fees for recording and copies of recorded documents, uniform commercial code real estate-related recordings, Federal Tax Lien filings, marriage certificates, birth certificates, death certificates and real estate transfers. In addition, Cashiering staff prepares the recorded documents for imaging by the Records Management Division of the Department of Administration and return to the customer.

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Staffing (FTE)	5.07	5.46	6.90	6.01	0.55
Personnel Costs	\$168,771	\$215,201	\$264,139	\$242,431	\$27,230
Operating Expenses	\$5,328	\$11,950	\$10,839	\$11,562	(\$388)
Interdept. Charges	\$8,550	\$18,385	\$15,270	\$16,360	(\$2,025)
Total Expenditures:	\$182,649	\$245,536	\$290,248	\$270,353	\$24,817
Total Revenues:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tax Levy	\$182,649	\$245,536	\$290,248	\$270,353	\$24,817



Program Highlights

The Personnel cost increase of \$27,230 includes \$14,875 for normal cost to continue for salary and benefit increases for 5.46 FTE as well as a shift of \$12,355 or 0.55 FTE in Temporary Extra Help from Administrative Services program to better reflect where temporary extra help is utilized. Operating expenses decrease slightly overall due to lower software expenses. Interdepartmental charges decrease \$2,025 due to a reallocation of postage expenses to the Real Estate program reflecting historical usage patterns.



Activity	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Number of Real Estate Documents Examined and Cashiered	163,700	115,000	234,000	120,000	5,000
Subdivision Plats, Certified Survey Maps, Condo Plats Examined and Cashiered	282	270	280	270	0
Revenues & Fees Collected (County & State combined)	\$10,228,604	\$7,400,000	\$11,570,000	\$7,750,000	\$350,000

Tax Listing

Program Description

Tax Listing creates and maintains the accuracy of lists and descriptions of all parcels of real estate in the county that are subject to tax and also those exempt from tax. Tax Listing provides lists, maps, and descriptions of such parcels to the public. In addition, Tax Listing is responsible for all coordination and transmission of tax listing file information in response to municipal requests.

Performance Measure Description

The Tax Listing program has established a benchmark that real estate documents recorded in the Register of Deeds Office affecting the tax listing be entered into the tax file by the second Friday of the month following the month in which the documents were recorded. When this is accomplished, the data can be digitized onto cadastral maps and used by the Land Information Systems program.

**Performance Measures**

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Number of months, out of 12, where documents affecting tax listing are processed by the second Friday of the following month	8/12	10/12	8/12	10/12	0

Staffing (FTE)

5.00	4.00	4.04	4.00	0.00
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Personnel Costs	\$198,442	\$185,738	\$169,593	\$188,115	\$2,377
Operating Expenses	\$1,500	\$4,266	\$1,635	\$23,146	\$18,880
Interdept. Charges	\$10,415	\$13,505	\$9,487	\$20,089	\$6,584
Total Expenditures:	\$210,357	\$203,509	\$180,715	\$231,350	\$27,841
Charges for Services	\$11,020	\$41,000	\$35,786	\$41,000	\$0
Total Revenues:	\$11,020	\$41,000	\$35,786	\$41,000	\$0
Tax Levy	\$199,337	\$162,509	\$144,929	\$190,350	\$27,841

Program Highlights

Personnel costs increase \$2,377 or 1.2% due to normal cost to continue for salary and benefit increases. Operating expenses increase \$18,880 primarily due to a new software maintenance expense of \$20,000 associated with the partial year impact of the Tax Records replacement capital project. The ongoing annual maintenance cost of the tax system is estimated to be \$85,000, of which 50% will be funded by the Treasurer's Office and 50% or \$42,500 will be budgeted within the Register of Deeds Office in 2005. The 2004 prorated cost of \$20,000 reflects anticipated licensing costs beginning in the second half of 2004.

Interdepartmental charges increase \$6,584 due to \$3,700 in first time budgeting for Notice of Assessment administrative indirect charges. Municipalities that use Tax Listing services are charged \$1.47 per issued notice. The charge includes Register of Deeds direct costs and a portion of countywide administrative support costs. The \$3,700 represents the administrative cost portion of the collected fee. The majority of the remaining interdepartmental charge increase reflects continued phase in of EUTF computer charges.

Charges for Services continue unchanged and include \$30,000 in estimated fee revenues from municipalities for issuance of Notice of Assessments. Revenues are not increased due to the variability in the number of assessment notices issued annually. The remaining \$11,000 in revenues reflects anticipated copy fee revenue based on past volume.

Tax Listing (cont.)

**Activity**

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Real Estate & Personal Property Accounts maintained by Tax Listing	88,628	89,500	90,500	91,500	2,000
Number of updates made to the tax file	33,240	38,500	35,000	36,000	(2,500)
Number of Wisconsin Real Estate Transfer Returns Processed	13,460	14,000	13,300	13,000	(1,000)

Vital Statistics

Program Description

Vital statistics is responsible for the accurate recording and filing of birth, marriage, and death certificates; and handling voter registration for the county. This program also examines all original birth, marriage, and death certificates before processing them to the state. The vital statistics program provides both phone and walk-in reception services for the entire office.

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Staffing (FTE)	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.00
Personnel Costs	\$71,365	\$77,389	\$76,784	\$81,201	\$3,812
Operating Expenses	\$941	\$6,217	\$4,246	\$5,800	(\$417)
Interdept. Charges	\$14,328	\$12,320	\$12,934	\$15,592	\$3,272
Total Expenditures:	\$86,634	\$95,926	\$93,964	\$102,593	\$6,667
Charges for Services	\$159,020	\$146,000	\$154,784	\$146,000	\$0
Total Revenues:	\$159,020	\$146,000	\$154,784	\$146,000	\$0
Tax Levy (a)	(\$72,386)	(\$50,074)	(\$60,820)	(\$43,407)	\$6,667

(a) Revenues in excess of expenditures are used to offset tax levy funding required for other county general fund operations.

Program Highlights

Personnel costs increase due to normal cost to continue for salary and benefit increases for 2.0 FTE. Interdepartmental charges increase \$3,272 due to a reallocation of copier replacement charges from the Administrative Program and continued phase in of EUTF charges.

**Activity**

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Number of Certificates Filed					
Birth	6,120	6,200	6,200	6,200	0
Death	2,724	3,000	3,000	3,000	0
Marriage	2,319	2,400	1,800	2,000	(400)
Number of Certified Copies Issued					
Birth	9,530	11,000	11,000	11,000	0
Death	27,239	24,000	26,000	25,000	1,000
Marriage	3,964	3,400	3,600	3,500	100

Real Estate

Program Description

Real estate is responsible for the indexing of all deeds, mortgages, plats, instruments and certified survey maps, writings and filing of certain other documents. Real estate is also responsible for preparing and delivering, upon receipt of the proper fee, certified copies of any record, file, map, or plat in the office.

Performance Measures

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Number of days when period between receipt of Legally Recorded Documents and on-line availability to public exceeds 10 days	156	6	189	6	0
Number of Days when period between recording and return mailing of documents exceeds thirty days	117	10	189	10	0
Staffing (FTE)	9.68	11.06	11.57	11.61	0.55

Personnel Costs	\$232,795	\$428,964	\$428,312	\$454,926	\$25,962
Operating Expenses	\$13,434	\$16,651	\$14,602	\$14,700	(\$1,951)
Interdept. Charges	\$360,126	\$280,507	\$606,427	\$347,509	\$67,002
Total Expenditures:	\$606,355	\$726,122	\$1,049,341	\$817,135	\$91,013
Charges for Services	\$2,001,540	\$1,158,500	\$2,935,475	\$1,307,000	\$148,500
Total Revenues:	\$2,001,540	\$1,158,500	\$2,935,475	\$1,307,000	\$148,500
Tax Levy (a)	(\$1,395,185)	(\$432,378)	(\$1,886,134)	(\$489,865)	(\$57,487)

(a) Revenues in excess of expenditures are used to offset tax levy funding required for other county general fund operations.

**Program Highlights**

Personnel costs increase \$25,962 for normal salary and benefit cost to continue for 11.06 FTE, as well as a shift of \$12,355, for 0.55 FTE in Temporary Extra Help, from the Administrative Services program. Operating expenses decrease \$1,951 due to a reallocation of ongoing office equipment expenses to Administrative Services program. Interdepartmental charges mainly consist of imaging charges of \$251,667 and postage charges of \$52,500. Interdepartmental charge increases of \$67,002 include \$53,158 for imaging and \$3,591 for postage related expenses associated with an increase in budgeted document volume. Interdepartmental charges also include \$29,292 for EUTF charges, which increase \$8,848, due to continued phase-in of computer total cost of ownership charges.

Charges for Services revenues increase \$148,500 reflecting an increase in recording fees collected. This is due to an increase in the estimated amount of real estate document recordings to 120,000 in 2004, from 115,000 in 2003, and an increase in the number of pages recorded per document which is primarily related to mortgage lender use of longer mortgage forms.

**Activity**

	2002 Actual	2003 Budget	2003 Estimate	2004 Budget	Budget Change
Number of Real Estate Documents entered into the Tract Index System, re-key verified, and returned to the customer by mail *	163,700	115,000	234,000	120,000	5,000
Subdivision Plats, Certified Survey Maps, Condo Plats Indexed	282	270	280	270	0

* The 2004 budgeted document volume of 120,000 is based on historical averages. The 2002 actual and 2003 estimate reflect high levels of mortgage refinancing resulting from record low interest rates. In 2004 interest rates are expected to increase and moderate returning document levels to historical levels.